

S.N.: 09/995,095
Art Unit: 2638

REMARKS

Claims 1-21, 23, and 25-27 are currently pending. Claims 22 and 24 have been canceled. Claim 8 has been amended to include the indicated-as-allowable subject matter of claim 22. Claim 17 has been amended to include the indicated-as-allowable subject matter of claim 24. Claim 26 incorporates the subject matter of claim 8 and indicated-as-allowable claim 23. Claim 27 incorporates the subject matter of claim 17 and indicated-as-allowable claim 25. It is respectfully submitted that no new matter has been added.

The Patent Office rejected claims 8, 9, and 17 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Iwamatsu, U.S. Patent No. 6,707,846. The Patent Office rejected claim 10 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Iwamatsu. The Patent Office rejected claims 18 and 19 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Iwamatsu as applied to claim 17 in view of Rhodes et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,909,437.

The Patent Office is thanked for the indication that claims 1-7, 20, and 21 are allowed and that claims 11-16 contain allowable subject matter. Applicant believes all pending claims 1-21, 23, and 25-27 are allowable because all pending claims now incorporate previously indicated-as-allowable subject matter.

The Patent Office is respectfully requested to reconsider and remove the rejections of the claims 1-21 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) based on Iwamatsu or under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) based on Iwamatsu, alone or in combination with Rhodes, and to allow all of the pending claims 1-21, 23, and 25-27 as now presented for examination. An early notification of the allowability of claims 1-21, 23, and 25-27 is earnestly solicited.

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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. BOX 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

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